

REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 10, and 11 are all the claims pending in the application.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 1-7 would be allowable if claim 1 were rewritten to overcome the § 112, second paragraph rejection.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to overcome the §112 rejection.

Prior Art Claim Rejections

Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thomas et al. (US 5,607,259) in view of Howard et al. (US 2,148,427).

Claim 8

Applicant has added the recitations of dependent claim 9 to independent claim 8 and has added the recitation “the at least one internal weld bead having a degree of interpenetration with the at least one external elemental weld bead.” Applicant respectfully submits that claim is patentable at least due to its dependency.

Claims 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Howard in view of Conrad (US 2,093,881).

Claim 10

The Examiner confirmed during the interview the amendments to claim 10 would overcome this rejection if it were clarified that the claim is directed to *the combination of both* the chamfer and the features of the welding head and chamfer guide. However, the Examiner also stated that a search will be necessary to confirm patentability.

Claim 11

Applicant has amended claim 11 so that it is now a method claim that depends from claim 7, which in turn depends from claim 1 allowable claim 1. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 is patentable.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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